

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00012 060923Z

12

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 (ISO) W

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R 051700Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4908

S E C R E T NOUAKCHOTT 0012

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AO MR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL LETTER ON ANGOLA

REF: STATE 1375, 1376

1. I HANDED ENGLISH AND FRENCH TEXTS OF PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER ON ANGOLA TO MOUTJABA OULD MUHAMMAD FALL, PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH, AT NOON JANUARY 5. FALL INDICATED HE WOULD TAKE LETTER IN TO PRESIDENT AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY, AND WOULD REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH ME RE POSSIBLE RESPONSE.

2. DURING BRIEF MEETING, FALL DECLARED MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON ANGOLA CLOSELY RESEMBLED THAT OF USG: (A) ANGOLA PROBLEM SHOULD BE RESOLVED BY ANGOLANS, OR FAILING THAT, BY AFRICANS THROUGH OAU; AND (B) SOVIETS AND CUBANS HAD NO BUSINESS IN ANGOLA AND SHOULD GET OUT. FALL ADDED THAT GIRM UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED U.S. DECISION TO INTERVENE IN ANGOLA TO COUNTER SOVIET EFFORTS, RECOGNIZING REALITIES OF GREAT POWER RIVALRIES, BUT CONFIDENT THAT SINCE U.S. SHARED AFRICAN VIEW THAT ANGOLA WAS AFRICAN PROBLEM, U.S. COULD BE COUNTED ON TO WITHDRAW IF AND WHEN AFRICANS PRODUCE SOLUTION. FALL APPEARED TO BE GENERALLY AWARE OF THRUST OF PRESIDENT'S LETTER, WHETHER THROUGH SOME INTRA-AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE NET OR FROM INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICES REPORTS.

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3. ALTHOUGH I AM CONFIDENT THAT FALL WAS TRANSMITTING AC-

CURATELY POSITION GIRM HAD DECIDED IN ADVANCE TO COMMUNICATE TO U.S. AMBASSADOR, I AM SOMEWHAT LESS CERTAIN THAT POSITION ENUNCIATED IS IN FACT GIRM'S "CRUNCH STAND", SINCE ARABS TEND TO SAY WHAT THEY THINK THEIR LISTENERS WANT TO HEAR. WHATEVER GIRM'S ROCK-BOTTOM POSITION ON ANGOLA, I HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT MAURITANIANS ARE ABOUT TO MOUNT BARRICADES TO LEAD FIGHT AGAINST SOVIETS, CUBANS, OR MPLA DOMINANCE OR STAND AGAINST TIDE OF CONCERTED OAU ACTION WHATEVER THAY MAY ULTIMATELY BE.HANDYSIDE

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